

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 Sub A3 1. A method comprising:
 2 receiving a plurality of task data indicating a plurality of tasks and a
 3 plurality of agent data indicating a plurality of agents;
 4 storing the task data and the agent data in a database system; and
 5 assigning respective tasks of the plurality of tasks to at least one of the
 6 agents according to workflows.

1 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the receiving comprises:
 2 receiving the task data from a plurality of sources.

1 3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of sources comprise
 2 heterogeneous media switches.

1 4. The method of Claim 3 wherein each of the heterogeneous media
 2 switches is from a group consisting of electronic mail systems, internet live text
 3 systems, internet voice transmission systems, telephonic voice systems,
 4 telephonic facsimile systems, and voice mail systems.

1 5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the receiving of the plurality of
 2 agent data comprises:
 3 receiving status messages from the plurality of agents.

1 6. The method of Claim 5 wherein the status messages designate
 2 either busy or available.

1 7. The method of Claim 5 wherein the status messages provide an
 2 agent availability data.

1 8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the agent availability data
2 comprises any one of the group including whether the agent is busy, is available,
3 accepts a first type of task, declines a second type of task, multi-tasks, or accepts a
4 task upon a system overloaded condition.

1 9. The method of Claim 8 wherein the system overloaded condition is
2 workflow defined.

1 10. The method of Claim 1 wherein the database system comprises:
2 at least one volatile memory database and at least one writeable medium
3 database.

1 11. The method of Claim 10 wherein the volatile memory database and
2 the writeable medium database are synchronized.
3

1 12. The method of Claim 1 wherein the workflows are user definable.

1 13. The method of Claim 1 wherein the assigning comprises:
2 executing a task queued work flow responsive to receiving the task data;
3 and
4 executing an agent availability workflow responsive to receiving the agent
5 data.

1 14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the executing of the task queued
2 work flow comprises:
3 storing the task data as a task entry in the database system;
4 identifying a first agent of the plurality of agents to handle a first task of
5 the plurality of tasks; and
6 assigning the first agent the first task.

1 15. The method of Claim 14 wherein the identifying comprises:
2 searching the database system for an agent entry meeting defined criteria.

1 16. The method of Claim 15 wherein the assigning comprises:
2 notifying the first agent to handle the first task; and
3 receiving a response from the first agent either accepting or declining the
4 first task; and
5 if the first agent accepts the first task, updating the database system.

1 17. The method of Claim 16 wherein the updating of the database
2 system comprises:
3 modifying the task entry and the agent entry.

1 18. The method of Claim 13 wherein the executing of the agent
2 availability workflow comprises:
3 storing the agent data as an agent entry in the database system;
4 identifying a first task of the plurality of tasks to be handled by a first agent
5 of the plurality of agents; and
6 assigning the first task to the first agent.

1 19. The method of Claim 18 wherein the identifying comprises:
2 searching the database system for a task entry meeting defined criteria.

1 20. The method of Claim 19 wherein the assigning comprises:
2 notifying the first agent to handle the first task; and
3 receiving a response from the first agent either accepting or declining the
4 first task; and
5 if the first agent accepts the first task, updating the database system.

1 21. The method of Claim 20 wherein the updating the database system
2 comprises:
3 modifying the task entry and the agent entry.

1 22. A system comprising:
2 a blending engine coupled to a plurality of media switches such that the
3 blending engine receives a plurality of task data from the plurality of media
4 switches;
5 a plurality of agent workstations coupled to the blending engine such that
6 the agent workstations provide a plurality of agent data to the blending engine,
7 and the blending engine provides a plurality of task assignments to the agent
8 workstations.

1 23. The system of Claim 22 further comprising:
2 a blending database coupled to the blending engine such that the blending
3 engine and the blending database exchange the agent data and the task data; and
4 a workflow manager coupled to the blending database and the blending
5 engine such that the workflow manager:
6 accesses the blending database,
7 executes workflows, and
8 communicates the task assignments to the blending engine.

1 24. The system of Claim 23 wherein:
2 each media switch comprises an adapter coupled to a media specific queue;
3 and
4 each media specific queue is coupled to the blending engine.

1 25. The system of Claim 23 wherein:
2 each media switch provides at least one connection to one of a group
3 comprising an electronic mail system, an internet live text system, an internet

4 voice transmission system, a telephonic voice system, a telephonic facsimile
5 system, and a voice mail system.

1 26. The system of Claim 23 wherein:
2 each agent workstation comprises a desktop helper; and
3 each desktop helper is coupled to the blending engine via a blending
4 engine queue.

1 27. The system of Claim 23 wherein the blending database comprises at
2 least one volatile memory database synchronized with at least one writeable
3 medium database.

1 28. The system of Claim 27 wherein the blending database stores a
2 plurality of task entries and a plurality of agent entries.

1 29. The system of Claim 28 wherein the volatile memory database is a
2 superset of the writeable medium database.

1 30. The system of Claim 28 wherein the volatile memory database
2 stores a blending engine queue data and a plurality of media specific queue data.

1 31. The system of Claim 28 wherein the accesses the blending database
2 comprises:
3 reading the task entries and the agent entries.

1 32. A machine readable medium having stored thereon instructions
2 which when executed by a processor cause the machine to perform operations
3 comprising:
4 receiving a plurality of task data indicating a plurality of tasks and a
5 plurality of agent data indicating a plurality of agents;

6 storing the task data and the agent data in a database system; and
7 assigning respective tasks of the plurality of tasks to at least one of the
8 agents according to workflows.

1 33. The machine readable medium of Claim 32 wherein receiving
2 comprises:
3 receiving the task data from a plurality of sources.

1 34. The machine readable medium of Claim 33 wherein the plurality of
2 sources comprise heterogeneous media switches.

1 35. The machine readable medium of Claim 34 wherein each of the
2 heterogeneous media switches is from a group consisting of electronic mail
3 systems, internet live text systems, internet voice transmission systems,
4 telephonic voice systems, telephonic facsimile systems, and voice mail systems.

1 36. The machine readable medium of Claim 32 wherein the receiving a
2 plurality of agent data comprises:
3 receiving status messages from the plurality of agents.

1 37. The machine readable medium of Claim 36 wherein the status
2 messages designate either busy or available.

1 38. The machine readable medium of Claim 36 wherein the status
2 messages provide an agent availability data.

1 39. The machine readable medium of Claim 38 wherein the agent
2 availability data comprises any one of the group including whether the agent is
3 busy, available, accepts a first type of task, declines a second type of task, multi-
4 tasks, or accepts a task upon a system overloaded condition.

1 40. The machine readable medium of Claim 39 wherein the system
2 overloaded condition is workflow defined.

1 41. The machine readable medium of Claim 32 wherein the database
2 system comprises:

3 at least one volatile memory database and at least one writeable medium
4 database.

1 42. The machine readable medium of Claim 41 wherein the volatile
2 memory database and the writeable medium database are synchronized.

1 43. The machine readable medium of Claim 42 wherein the workflows
2 are user definable.

1 44. The machine readable medium of Claim 42 wherein the assigning
2 comprises:

3 executing a task queued work flow responsive to receiving the task data;

4 and

5 executing an agent availability workflow responsive to receiving the agent
6 data.

1 45. The machine readable medium of Claim 44 wherein the executing a
2 task queued work flow comprises:

3 storing the task data as a task entry in the database system;

4 identifying a first agent of the agents to handle a first task of the plurality
5 of tasks; and

6 assigning the first agent the first task.

1 46. The machine readable medium of Claim 45 wherein the identifying
2 comprises:

3 searching the database system for an agent entry meeting defined criteria.

1 47. The machine readable medium of Claim 46 wherein the assigning
2 comprises:

3 notifying the first agent to handle the first task; and
4 receiving a response from the first agent either accepting or declining the
5 first task; and
6 if the first agent accepts the first task, updating the database system.

1 48. The machine readable medium of Claim 47 wherein the updating
2 the database system comprises:

3 modifying the task entry and the agent entry.

1 49. The machine readable medium of Claim 44 wherein the executing
2 an agent availability workflow comprises:

3 storing the agent data as an agent entry in the database system;
4 identifying a first task of the plurality of tasks to be handled by a first agent
5 of the plurality of agents;
6 assigning the first task to the first agent.

1 50. The machine readable medium of Claim 49 wherein the identifying
2 comprises:

3 searching the database system for a task entry meeting defined criteria.

1 51. The machine readable medium of Claim 50 wherein the assigning
2 comprises:

3 notifying the first agent to handle the first task; and
4 receiving a response from the first agent either accepting or declining the
5 first task; and
6 if the first agent accepts the first task, updating the database system.

1 52. The machine readable medium of Claim 51 wherein the updating
2 the database system comprises:
3 modifying the task entry and the agent entry.

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